Pat Slaven

Textiles are my medium. Over the years I've spun yarn, knit, woven fabric, felted wool, sewed, crocheted, knitted and quilted. If it's made of textiles I look at it and probably have worked some version of it.

I learned to sew in grade school and made many of my own clothes though high school and college. Life got in the way and clothing manufacturers got much better about providing tall and larger sizes. I am an engineer and textile chemist. Much of my work career was spent as an engineer at Consumer Reports here in Yonkers. In 2001 a project leader quit in the middle of a test project on Sewing Machines and I was asked to finish the project. I had to dig back to the days of sewing clothing and realized that the world of sewing had changed a lot.

We had to ‘break in’ each sewing machine for 20 minutes and I quickly figured out that ‘strip piecing’ was a great way to do this. With a bit of slicing and rotating suddenly I was making interesting looking quilt tops and anyone associated with the project who was having a baby, got a quilt. Playing with the free form pieces was much more interesting than the standard quilt patterns. In the long sleepless nights after 9-11, I started telling stories with my quilts. I quickly moved beyond the conventional piecing and worked to create light and movement. Quilting became my art form. It's a sub-genre called art quilting. I use fabric to help tell the story. I like it best when quilts are an interpretation of action and give you the feeling of the color, the line and the movement. Where the fabric suggests things rather than gives you an exact representation. What is life but an approximation?

Nevertheless, I continue to Weave and Knit. I recently did a series of rugs made from t-shirt loopers. Think about a giant potholer loom and you get the idea. Again the colors and placement create images of the seasons.

Often I incorporate fabric I have dyed, along with objects and yarn. I am also an unrepentant yarn bomber. And am including a photo of one yarn bomb.

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